

Title: Implementing the National Children's Study (NCS) in Colorado-the Douglas County experience

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Douglas County, located in the southern portion of the Denver metropolitan area of Colorado, was selected in 2008 to participate in the NCS and since 2010 it is one of the 37 Vanguard study locations, implementing the "direct to the public" alternative recruitment strategy. Important characteristics of Douglas County are the suburban/ rural character, the predominance of wealthy, non-Hispanic white inhabitants, and the fact that most health care activities are conducted through facilities located outside the County.

The goals of our sampling approach were: 1) to randomly select segments of the county that generate ~ 30-35 births/year ; and 2) to identify slightly larger areas surrounding the segments (secondary sampling units-SSUs) that maximize communication and participation by community. Through this process, a total of 10 SSUs were selected that are estimated to generate ~1000 birth/year. Our recruitment strategy relies on two complementary approaches: 1) marketing to eligible communities; and 2) direct engagement through mass-mailing and phone campaign. Our mass-mailing campaign included mailing a Pregnancy Screener to all eligible dwelling units (over 22,000) over the last 6 months. While we have not yet achieved steady state, we are now recruiting over our targeted number of eligible women/month, and over one third of them have already given birth. In addition, our Center is participating in 6 formative research projects, covering a spectrum of fields of interest to the NCS.